

Wisconsin Department of Employee Trust Funds

Steps to Retirement

1.1 Welcome



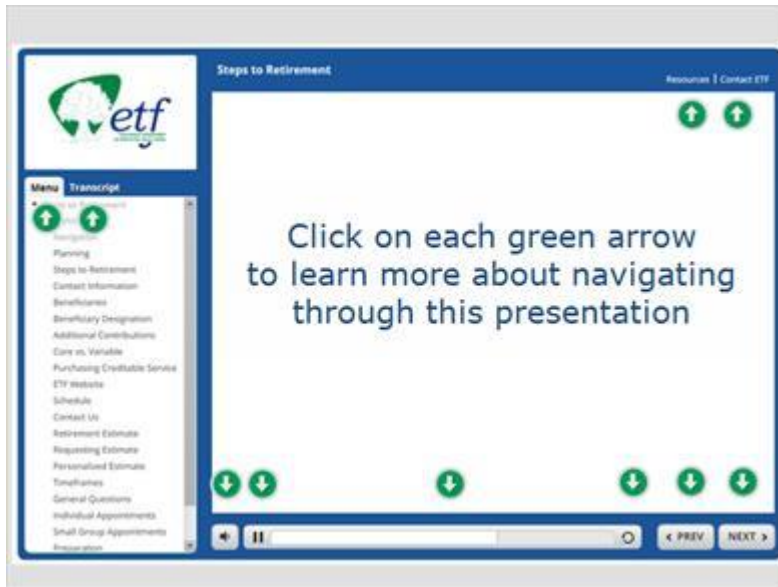
Welcome to this presentation on steps individuals in the Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS) should take to ensure that they are ready for retirement.

1.2 Audio



This presentation contains audio. You have the option of turning the audio off and reading along under the Transcript tab on the left. Please click one of the buttons below to continue.

1.3 Navigation



Click on each green button to learn more about navigating through this presentation, and then click on the next button when you are ready to continue.

1.4 Planning



Planning and preparation are essential for retirement, and there are some things that you can proactively do to prepare for a smooth transition to retirement.

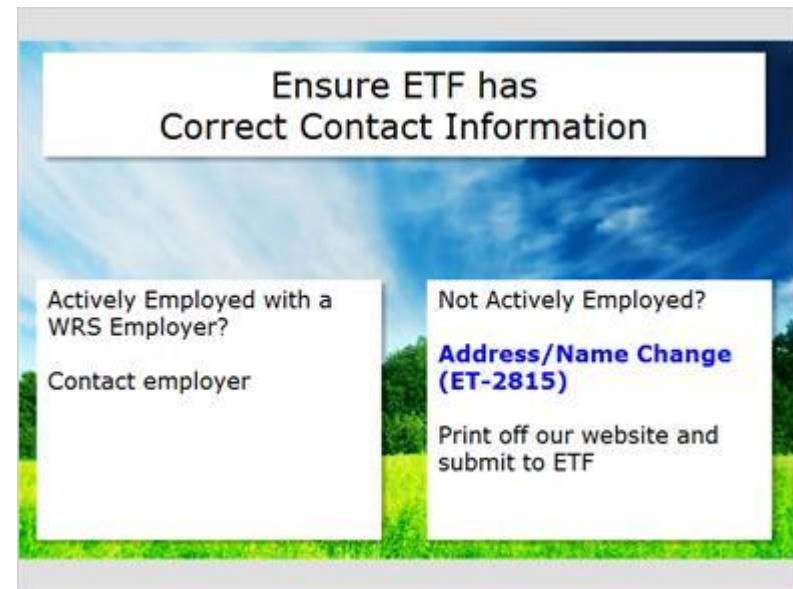
1.5 Steps to Retirement



As you get closer to retirement, it is important to understand how that transition will affect the benefits you currently have, such as health insurance and life insurance. There are five specific things that you can do to better prepare for your retirement.

1. Update your contact information with both your employer and ETF.
2. Recognize the importance of having an updated beneficiary designation on file with ETF.
3. Identify ways to enhance your benefit, including making additional contributions and, if eligible, purchasing service.
4. Locate additional information and resources at etf.wi.gov and sign up for email updates.
5. Request a retirement estimate within a year of your desired retirement date and schedule an appointment with a benefits specialist, if needed.

1.6 Contact Information



Step 1: Make sure ETF has all of your contact information. If you are actively employed with a WRS employer, ensure that your employer has your current mailing address. If you are not currently employed by a WRS employer, please contact ETF directly with any name or address changes. Complete and submit the Address/Name Change form, ET-2815 to ETF. You can find the form on our website.

Why is it important to keep your address on file with ETF up to date? Whether you are currently receiving benefits, or if you are many years from retirement, you may miss important information such as annuity payment statements, your annual Statement of Benefits, tax documents and other ETF notifications affecting critical decisions such as when to retire, benefit changes and more.

Address/Name Change Form (ET-2815): <http://etf.wi.gov/publications/et2815.pdf>

1.7 Beneficiaries



Step 2: Make sure you know whether or not WRS death benefits will be paid to your survivors **and** that ETF knows how you want your death benefits paid.

While thinking about your own death is not pleasant, thinking about who will receive your benefits when you die is worth some consideration at this point.

Death benefits are paid according to the most recent beneficiary designation on file with ETF.

A beneficiary can be a person, entity, trust or estate.

1.8 Beneficiary Designation

A graphic with a light gray background. At the top, there are three white rectangular boxes. The first box on the left is titled 'Beneficiary Designation Form' in blue, with 'ET- 2320 on our website etf.wi.gov' below it. The middle box is titled 'Call Us' in gray, with '1-877-533-5020' below it. The third box on the right is titled 'Standard Sequence' in gray, with 'See back of Beneficiary Designation form (ET-2320) for more information' below it. Below these three boxes, the text 'Benefits paid out according to designation on file at ETF' is written in a large, bold, black font.

Your death benefits will be distributed according to your designation after it is accepted by ETF. Even if your most current designation was filed many years ago, ETF must follow it -- so it is important to keep this information current. Complete and submit the Beneficiary Designation form, ET-2320 to ETF. You can find the form on our website. If you do not know if you have a beneficiary designation on file with ETF, please contact us toll-free at 877-533-5020 to discuss this issue.

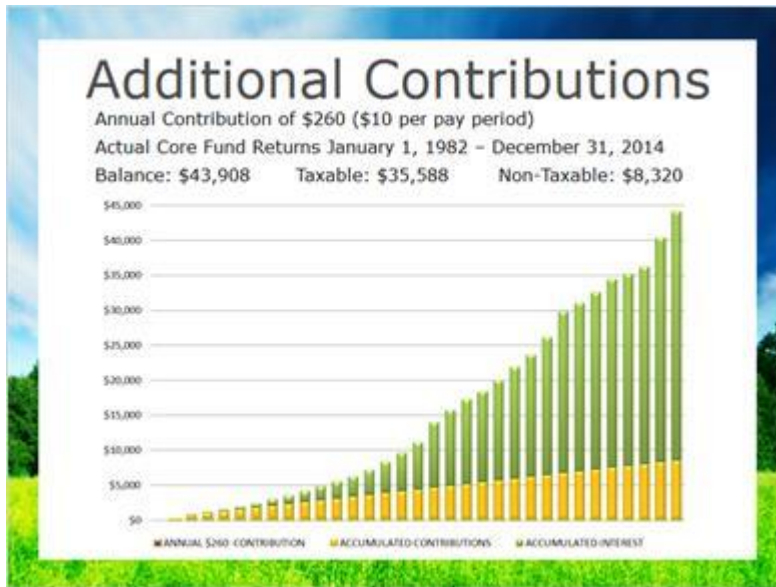
If you do not have a beneficiary designation on file at ETF, Statutory Standard Sequence applies. This sequence is a grouping of relatives - the details are fully explained on the Beneficiary Designation form. Please note: Under Statutory Standard Sequence any eligible beneficiaries change with many life events such as marriage, divorce, and the birth of children.

If you desire more control over how your death benefits are paid, you may want to complete and submit the beneficiary designation form to ETF. This includes the option to list standard sequence if you prefer.

Beneficiary Designation Form (ET-2320):

<http://etf.wi.gov/publications/et2320.pdf>

1.9 Additional Contributions



Step 3: Consider additional investment options that may be available to you.

The first option is to deposit post-tax additional contributions directly to your WRS account.

An example of actual returns from the recent past looks like this.

Hopefully, you can see the power of compound interest, and how putting a little money aside can reap large dividends later.

1.10 Core vs. Variable



Another investment consideration is to evaluate your risk tolerance and your participation in the Variable Fund.

Everyone participates in the Core Fund, and some may elect to participate in the Variable Fund.

It is important to consider if you want to continue participating in the Variable Fund as you transition to retirement.

The Core Fund is a fully diversified portfolio. The Variable Fund is mainly common stocks.

The Core Fund has a 5-year smoothing period to mitigate highs and lows, but the Variable Fund does not. The Core Fund has a guaranteed minimum (or floor) payment, whereas the Variable Fund does not.

1.11 Purchasing Creditable Service

Creditable Service Purchasing

Forfeited Service:	Less Common Types of Service to Purchase:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Worked in WRS covered position and took a separation benefit▪ May be eligible to purchase service	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Prior Military Service or Other Government Service, such as teaching in another state▪ Qualifying Period prior to 1973

Finally, you should investigate if you are able to enhance your WRS benefit by purchasing creditable service.

The most common form of purchase is forfeited service. If you worked in a WRS position and took a separation benefit, which is payment of your employee contributions and interest before minimum retirement age, then you may be eligible to purchase that service.

You may also be eligible for less common types of purchase such as prior military service, other government service such as teaching in another state, or a qualifying period that was a 6-month period at the start of employment with a WRS employer prior to 1973. If you believe any of these options may apply to you, obtain an estimate of the cost so you can decide if the benefit is worth the investment.

Remember, you need to make this purchase before terminating employment.

1.12 ETF Website: etf.wi.gov

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Wisconsin Department of Employee Trust Funds (ETF) website. The header includes the ETF logo and navigation tabs: members, retirees, employers, governing boards, and careers at ETF. A central banner features a man's face and the text "How can I increase my benefit? Take action now". Below this is a sign-up prompt for "It's Your Choice E-alert". The left sidebar contains a "Calculators" section with links for member education, forms and publications, and a top of page link. The right sidebar lists "What's New" with links to Retirement Alerts, CRF, Health Care Benefits Report, and various legislative updates.

Our website at etf.wi.gov has many resources that you will find helpful. The first place to explore is the member education tab. You can find it at the top of the column on the left hand side under the calculator icon.

You will see three tabs on the member education page.

The first is for videos and other media. This section is divided up into four stages of membership: New Employee, Mid-Career, Nearing Retirement, and Retired. If you scroll down, you will see information on a variety of topics, from life insurance, additional contributions, and how to use the online retirement calculator to payment options and social security benefits. The middle tab provides a schedule of face-to-face events held around the state, where you can attend in-person live presentations from our Member Education and Outreach staff. Simply click on your region to view upcoming events. The third tab brings you to the live webinar schedule and register to attend an upcoming online presentation that you are interested in.

If you head back to the left menu bar, you will see that Forms and Publications is right under member education. This is the place to go for all of the forms you may need to submit to us, including the Beneficiary Designation form, the Name/Address Change form, and the Retirement Estimate Form.

Finally, a good way to stay informed of news that could impact your future benefits is to subscribe to ETF e-mail updates. Simply enter your email address to receive information as it becomes available. It's best to use your personal address, in the event you no longer have access to your work email after retirement.

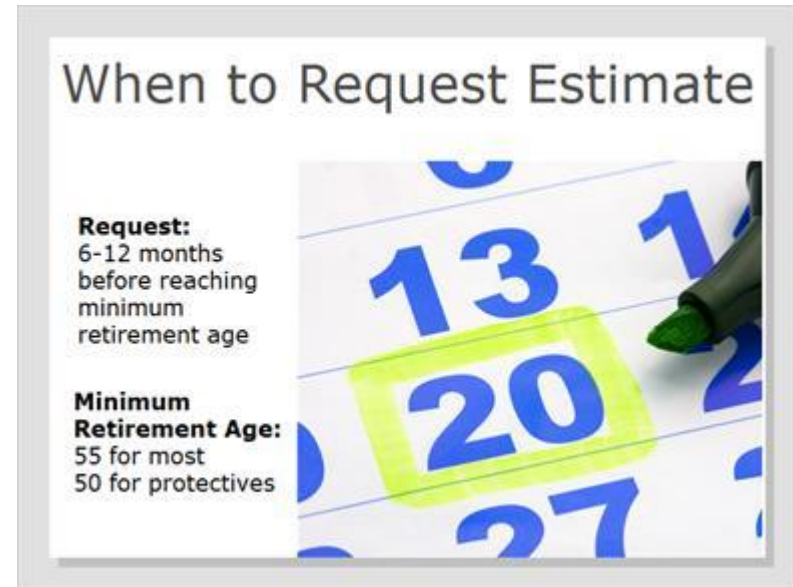
1.13 Contact Us



If you have questions about how to find this information on our website, know that we are here to help you. Call us toll-free or send us a secure email via the Contact ETF page on our website.

ETF Contact Page: <http://etf.wi.gov/contact.htm>

1.14 Retirement Estimate



Step 5: Request a retirement estimate and schedule an appointment with ETF staff to discuss your retirement options.

You can request a WRS retirement estimate 6 to 12 months prior to reaching minimum retirement age, which is 55 for most members and 50 for protective category employees, such as police officers and firefighters.

1.15 Requesting Estimate

The diagram consists of three white rectangular boxes arranged horizontally against a background of a blue sky and green grass. Each box contains text describing a different method for requesting a retirement estimate.

- Online Request Form**
Enter information online
- Retirement Estimate Form ET-4207**
Print, Fill out, Send in
- Call ETF**
877-533-5020

Requesting an estimate is easy - use our online request form; complete and return our Retirement Estimate Request form (ET-4207); or call ETF at 1-877-533-5020.

Note: If you were on active duty in the military prior to January 1, 1974, please submit a copy of your military discharge before requesting your estimate.

Online Request Form:

<https://trust.etf.wi.gov/ETFRetirementEstimateRgstWeb/retirementestimate.do>

Retirement Estimate Form: <http://etf.wi.gov/publications/et4207.pdf>

1.16 Personalized Estimate

[illegible]

We'll send you a personalized estimate (which doubles as the application) that shows the benefit options and annuity amounts available to you, up to one year from the current date.

Please review it completely and contact us if you have questions.

1.17 Timeframes



Important Time Frames

90 Days	60 Days	Retirement Annuity Option Change Application (ET-4319)
From effective retirement date to submit retirement benefits application	From first payment to change your mind on your annuity option, termination date, or named survivor	Print it off our website, complete and return to ETF if you need to modify your annuity option, termination date, or named survivor
Effective Retirement Date = last date on payroll, including vacation, personal holiday and sabbatical		

It is important to submit your retirement application within 90 days of your effective retirement date - that is, your last day on the payroll, including vacation, personal holiday, and sabbatical.

And, you will have 60 days from your first annuity payment to change your mind on your annuity option, termination date, or named survivor.

If you need to modify any of these things, please let us know in writing by completing and submitting the Retirement Annuity Option Change Application (ET-4319), which you can find on our website.

Retirement Annuity Option Change Application

<http://etf.wi.gov/publications/et4319.pdf>

1.18 General Questions



General Questions?

Member Communications Center

A smiling man wearing a headset, representing a Member Communications Center specialist.

If you have general questions about the retirement process, the specialists in our Member Communications Center are a great first point of contact.

Click on the Contact Us tab in the upper right for their information.

1.19 Individual Appointments

Individual Appointments

- In Madison
- 45 Minutes
- 6 months pre-retirement



More in-depth questions can be addressed by meeting with an ETF benefits specialist in Madison.


If you need one of these 45-minute appointments, we recommend scheduling it six months before you plan to retire.

These appointments are not mandatory - you can retire without meeting with a specialist.

1.20 Small Group Appointments

Small Group Appointments

- Same Material as Individual Appointment
- Statewide
- Hear Questions from Other Members Like You



Did you know we offer small group retirement appointments? The small group sessions cover the same material as in an individual appointment, but ETF schedules group sessions in locations statewide.

Many members prefer the convenience of a group appointment and appreciate hearing questions posed by other members.

To find a group appointment near you, go to the Members Tab on our website and select Face-to-Face.

1.21 Preparation



Whether you meet with a specialist one-on-one or attend a small group appointment, please prepare in advance - review your retirement estimate and the enclosed materials.

The appointments will cover topics including when to submit an application, annuity options, additional contributions, tax withholding, choosing a termination date, health and life insurance, the Variable Fund vs the Core Fund, annual adjustments and benefits.

Know that you are welcome to bring a guest with you to the appointment.

1.22 Review

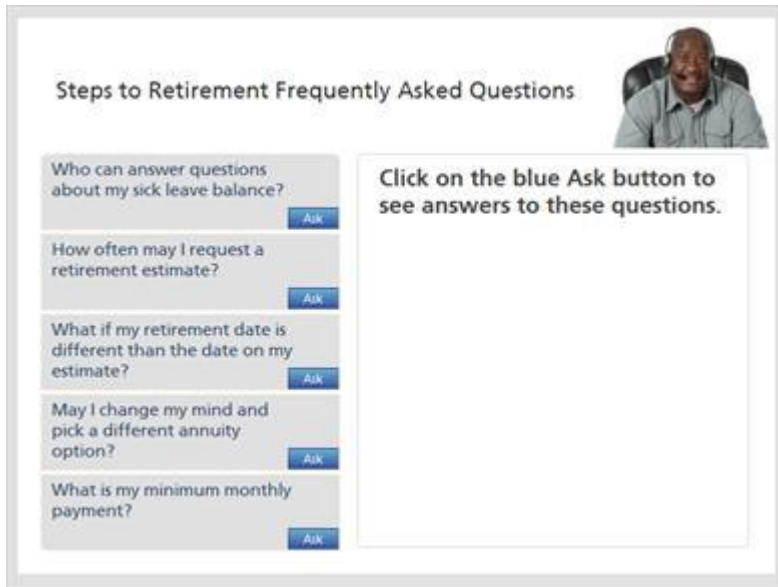


Let's take a minute to review these steps:

1. Update your contact information with both your employer and ETF.
2. Recognize the importance of having an updated beneficiary designation on file with ETF.
3. Identify ways to enhance your benefit, including making additional contributions and, if eligible, purchasing service.
4. Locate additional information and resources at etf.wi.gov and sign up for email updates. Be sure to follow us on Twitter, too! Our account name is @WI_ETF.
5. Request a retirement estimate within a year of your desired retirement date and schedule an appointment with a benefits specialist, if needed.

Click on the Resources Tab above to find documents referred to in this presentation and for a quick link to our website and contact information.

1.23 FAQs



Who can answer questions about my sick leave balance?

Your employer will know how many hours of sick leave, personal holiday, etc., you have. ETF does not have access to these records.

How often may I request a retirement estimate?

A new estimate can be requested 12 months after the last estimate was produced. If you are retiring much earlier than was estimated, please contact us to obtain an updated estimate. You must be within 12 months of minimum retirement age to request an estimate. There is a retirement estimate calculator on our website for your use, no matter when you plan to retire.

What if my retirement date is different than the date on my estimate?

As long as you retire within one year of when your estimate was calculated, it is still valid. There is a space on the second page of the estimate for you to enter your anticipated termination date.

1.24 Survey



May I change my mind and pick a different annuity option?

Yes, but only for a limited time. You have **60 days** from the date of your first payment to notify ETF in writing of your new annuity option choice. You cannot change your option after the **60 days**.

What is my minimum monthly payment?

Your minimum monthly annuity payment is the amount based on the Core portion of your annuity. This is referred to as your "Core Floor" and the value will appear on your annuity payment statement. ETF initially estimates your payment amounts and finalizes them approximately six to nine months after retirement.